

for violating six different sets of secret decrees.

Most recently on May 8, Russia's General Prosecutor charged Nikitin with treason, for the first time, and for releasing state secrets for the seventh time, but is no longer basing the charges on secret decrees. Rather than a victory for the rule of law, however, this new development is an even more egregious abuse because the charges are now based on exactly nothing. There were no public decrees defining secrets at time Nikitin allegedly revealed them, so the prosecutor has now violated the most fundamental principle of the rule of law: that one cannot be charged for a crime that was not defined at the time it happened.

□ 1245

These charges represent a very disturbing return to the old Soviet ways of prosecuting someone to repress and intimidate them.

One might ask, why should we care about this? There are many reasons. The world's environment belongs to all of us and a Chernobyl in slow motion should be of grave concern to the whole world. More specifically, for the U.S. Congress, we should be concerned because the United States is assisting Russia in building a facility in Murmansk for processing nuclear waste.

But it is what this case says about Russia today that should be of equal concern. Will Russian citizens really have the right to free speech? Will they be able to publish reports critical of the government without being arrested and prosecuted? Can Russia possibly face up to its massive environmental problems if it does not even want to hear about them? Will the rule of law emerge in Russia?

I ask my colleagues to join me in speaking out about this case, as many already have, sending letters to President Yeltsin as well as to Vice President GORE and Secretary of State Albright. I will be seeking an appointment with Russia's Ambassador to the United States to discuss the case, and I hope some colleagues will join me there as well.

There is too much at stake here—Russia's continuing progress as a free market, democratic country with the rule of law as its basis—too much at stake to ignore this critical case.

NATIONAL DEFENSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PETRI). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, over the last recess, while attending several Memorial Day services, I spent time focusing on the state of our dwindling national defense. By failing to maintain a strong military, we are dishonoring those who have served and died for our freedom. Unfortunately, the

next century will not be as peaceful as once envisioned.

Surprising the U.S. intelligence community, India and Pakistan have conducted nuclear weapons tests. It has been reported that Iraq has enough deadly biological weapons to kill every human being on earth. Just last week North Korea threatened the United States that they would not cease the production of nuclear weapons unless they were compensated. Despite administration claims that no nuclear missiles are aimed at American children, a CIA report reveals that 13 of China's 18 long-range strategic missiles have nuclear warheads aimed at U.S. cities.

Mr. Speaker, we do not live in a safe world. America faces new threats and dangers each and every day, and yet we continue to take risks with our military capabilities that would have been unthinkable a generation ago.

Our forces today are 32 percent smaller than they were just 10 years ago. In 1992 we had 18 Army divisions; we now have 10. In 1992 we had 24 fighter wings; we now have 13. In 1992 we had 546 Navy ships; we now have less than 300. In the last year the Navy has cut the Arsenal Ship, delayed the development of the next generation aircraft carrier, and cut its near term purchase of tactical aircraft by 45 percent.

This month the Army announced that it would downsize 6 divisions, cutting troop level 13 percent. Today I just read that the Marine Corps' entire procurement budget is now less than 1 week's worth of sales at Wal-Mart.

Mr. Speaker, I want to repeat that. The Marine Corps' entire procurement budget is now less than 1 week's worth of sales at Wal-Mart.

Our forces are dwindling and yet new threats to our freedoms are ever increasing. Quite frankly, we are taking our freedom for granted. The American family feels protected and safe. Mom and dad tell their children that they live in a peaceful world. They rest easy, hoping their government is adequately defending America.

But what they do not know is that right now, while nuclear missiles are aimed at U.S. cities, our troops do not even have the basic ammunition they need. The Army is \$1.7 billion short of basic ammunition, and the Marine Corps has a shortfall in ammunition of over \$193 million.

Mr. Speaker, I want to repeat that also. The Army is \$1.7 billion short of basic ammunition, and the Marine Corps has a shortfall in ammunition of over \$193 million. What they do not know is that in May, a Navy fighter squadron commander informed his superiors that only two of his squadron's 14 Tomcat fighter jets are mission capable because of a lack of spare parts.

He said in his official report, and I quote, I strongly believe that it is my duty to protect my aircrews. Living at the end of the parts food chain can present difficult challenges and obstacles that may be unmanageable. We no longer have the tools to do our job. We

must provide aircrews with the necessary flights to get them combat ready for the safety of this Nation.

We are not telling the American people about the state of our military, Mr. Speaker. I and many of my colleagues in Congress have called upon the administration, senior military and the press to tell the hard truth to the American people.

While the President has cut defense nearly in half, he has deployed our troops 25 times during his tenure. In fact, the President has deployed U.S. troops more often than any other President in peacetime since World War II. These peacekeeping deployments have cost the taxpayers over \$13 billion and have bled our forces. The reality is our troops are learning peacekeeping and forgetting war fighting.

These peacekeeping deployments have also kept our men and women in uniform away from their homes and families for lengthy periods of time and have thereby decreased their morale.

We cannot continue to ask our military to do more with less. In the name of those who have fought and who have died for this country, we must continue to maintain our military readiness. I urge my colleagues to help preserve our freedom and security. We must support our armed forces.

May God bless America.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 51 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2 p.m.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. NETHERCUTT) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Reverend James David Ford, D.D., offered the following prayer:

We pray with the Psalmist who said, "We give thanks to Thee, O God; we give thanks. We call on Thy name and recount Thy wondrous deeds."

We remember Your marvelous deeds, O God, and we celebrate the wonders of Your creation, for You have created this place where we live and learn, where there is work and play, where there is laughter and there are tears. You have given us a free will to choose the right over the wrong, the good over evil, and the honorable over the shameful.

While we praise Your name, O God, for the majesty of what You have given us, so we pray that we will be good stewards of the opportunities we have